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A LETTER FROM Mr. LESLY TO HIS FRIEND;

Againſt Alterations or Additions to the LITURGY of the CHURCH of *ENGLAND*.

LONDON:
Printed in the YEAR, MDCCXVIII.

LETTER

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Some Observations or Addi-
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A LETTER FROM Mr. *LESLY* TO HIS FRIEND, *&c.*

SIR,

I Have read the little Pamphlet, and ſee no Grounds for a Breach upon that Account, the utmoſt they can amount to, is probable Opinions. The Author ſays, *pag.* 10. *That the Church*

of Rome *does not make mixing Water with the Wine neceſſary*, and will he go further? He leans more to Tradition, than to the Scripture. Let him read Biſhop *Uſher*'s Anſwer to *Molouco* the Jeſuit, *chap.* 2. concerning Tradition, and there he will find abundant concurrent Teſtimonies of the Fathers, *p.* 25. *&c.* That nothing is to be received as Faith or Chriſtian Doctrine, but what is written in the Holy Scriptures, which are ſo perfect a Rule, that nothing is to be added to them, which if any do, let him fear that Woe denounced againſt ſuch. When the Teſtimonies from the Fathers are anſwered, then it will be time (and not before) to enter into the Diſpute of theſe unſcriptural Notions of mixing Water with the Wine, of Prayers for the Dead, for turning the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood, *&c.* Till then it will be ſufficient to ſay, that they are not written in Scripture, which cautions us not to be Wiſe above what is written. In ſhort we muſt firſt find our Rule of Faith, before we apply any thing to it, or it to any thing: If it be Scripture, we know where we are, but if it be Tradition, we launch into an Ocean which has nei-

neither Shore nor Bottom, nor we any Compaſs to ſteer by, where we muſt be driven about with every Wind of Doctrine. Our Lord ſeverely reprehended *the Traditions of the Elders*, as making the Word of God of none Effect; and are our Traditions better than theirs? for theirs had the Authority of their Church. I am grieved that ſo many of the handful ſhew Inclinations, to Popery: I am told that about a Dozen are gone off lately, and others ſend their Children, to be Educated in Popiſh, and even in Jeſuit Seminaries. The Lord rebuke the Spirit that is gone out amongſt us, to ſow Diviſions in the Church, for little Singularities, of which ſome Men are fond. But *quod ſine periculo neſcitur non ſine periculo definitur*, there is but *unum Neceſſarium*, but when we let our Imaginations work, we find Thouſands. This is plainly the Caſe reprehended, *Col.* ii. 18. Let me know *if this of the Reaſons for Reſtoring ſome Prayers*, is all the Diſpute which now makes new Diviſions amongſt us, even as I am told, to the Abſtaining from each other's Communion. Is Schiſm then become ſo indifferent a Thing? which we us'd to ſay nothing could excuſe, but the avoiding

avoiding what was directly ſinful by the Word of God. Different Churches have different Uſages, and we may like one better than another; but ſhall we make a Schiſm for this? Our Saviour who left us a Form of Prayer, left no Form for the Conſecration of the Elements, tho' he did for Baptiſm. In the Collect juſt before the Conſecration, with us we pray, that we may eat the Fleſh of Chriſt, and drink his Blood, which we are there about to receive, but this does not ſatisfie ſome, they would have it more expreſs, as in *Edward* the VI*th*'s Liturgy, *that they may be unto us the Body and Blood*; as in the Reaſons, *p.* 22. And where is the Difference? Ours ſeem more expreſs, *To eat the Body, and drink the Blood*, which no doubt is meant ſpiritually, according to *John* vi. 63. But they would have ſome wonderful Tranſmutation in the very Elements, which has introduced Tranſubſtantiation, whither are we running? *Mark thoſe who cauſe Diviſions among you, and avoid them.* The Reaſons, *p.* 26. ſpeaks not favourably of the Canon of the Maſs for omitting this Prayer, but he thinks it may be included in an after Prayer he mentions, as he owns it is in our Liturgy. But ſtill

he

he would have it more expreſs. Is not the Church of *Rome* herſelf, Superſtitious enough for him? But there is no Stay in this Art of charming about *the Letter that killeth*, inſtead of the *Spirit which giveth Life*. Theſe are not *able Miniſters of the New Teſtament*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. But we know that the Law is Spiritual, *Rom.* vii. 14. and that even in this Sacrament, *the Fleſh profiteth nothing*. But the Words that Chriſt ſpoke, are *Spirit*, and therein conſiſts the *Life* of all outward Inſtitutions, and not in the *Opus Operatum* of the Letter, and a Form of Words of human Invention to work like Charms. Theſe indeed have *a Form of Godlineſs, but know not the Power thereof, from ſuch turn away*; who if they can find a Form different from ours in ſome old Book, Rejoyce as for a Diſcovery, and fear not to make a Schiſm in the Church, to introduce ſome old Form which they have eſpous'd, and thereby become *Famous in the Congregation, men of renown*. I am much griev'd for this new Schiſm, and upon ſuch very ſlender Grounds, and it is plain whither all tends; therefore I have ſpoke the more earneſtly upon it, according as it now appears to me: When I know more of it, I will ſay more.

FINIS.

FINIS.